

REMARKS

The undersigned Counsel gratefully acknowledges a personal interview with Examiner Ali and her supervisor Examiner Mitchell at the USPTO in Alexandria, VA, on 19 December, 2007.

Although there exist some discrepancies between a current Office Action Summary of 03 October, 2007 and its corresponding Detailed Action, from the personal interview it is understood that: (i) claims 1-21 and 40 stand rejected; (ii) claims 22, 41, and 42 are objectionable; (iii) claims 23-35 remain canceled without prejudice; and (iv) claims 36-39 remain allowable.

In light of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, Applicants therefore respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claims 22, 36-39, and 41-42.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103.

The Examiner again rejected claims 1, 4, 6, 7-9, 15, 17-21, and now new claim 40, under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,377,157 to Zartman. The Examiner also again rejected claims 2, 3, 5, 10-14, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Zartman.

In response, Applicants repeat their earlier arguments and traverse these rejections for the record. However, to expedite prosecution these claims have been canceled herein.

Claim Objections.

The Examiner objected to claims 22, 41, and 42, but stated that they would be allowable if rewritten as specified.

In response, to expedite prosecution, these claims have been so amended herein.

Allowable Subject Matter.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's continued determination of patentability of claims 36-39.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that claims 22 and 41-42 are in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested; and claims 36-39 have been determined to be allowable by the Examiner.

This response is being submitted within a shortened statutory period for reply and is believed to be fully responsive for final disposition under 37 CFR §§1.113 and 1.116. Therefore, no fees are being submitted for an extension of time or continued examination.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned Counsel if such would further prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,
Emmanuel Delorme, et al.

Date: 20 December, 2007

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